Against the Grain

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Chaos

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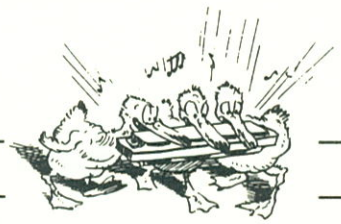
Chaos

by **Sandra K. Paul** (President, SKP Associates)



On the Friday before the start of ALA Annual in New Orleans, the Book and Serial Industry Systems Advisory Committees (BISAC and SISAC) sponsored a workshop for Integrated Library Systems (ILS) vendors, book wholesalers/jobbers, and journal subscription agents. It was a nuts and bolts look at what library systems do and do not have to do in order for libraries to participate in electronic data interchange (EDI). In preparation for this workshop, it became obvious to several of us that there are degrees to which an ILS must be able to create EDI messages, and/or create and transmit them, and/or receive and interpret messages received, and/or seek out messages sent to receive and interpret them. These alternatives became the basis for a very fruitful discussion during the workshop.

The other aspect of EDI that was discussed at the workshop will be the focal point of this column. It is the fact that there are only a small number of data elements that are really required to be moved from a message from a trading partner into an ILS. For instance, when a library places an order for a new publication — whether it is a book or serial — the library purchase order will contain lots of information specific to that order. However, the ONLY information the library expects to see on its invoices from the vendor may well be the library's purchase order number. Similarly, there are other such identifiers that are critical in book and serial order processing and fulfillment. **Ed Riding** of Dynix, who chairs the SISAC Implementation Task Force, developed the following information for serial purchasing and fulfillment. I hope we'll have comparable information about books in a subsequent CHAOS column.

SISAC X12 Match Points Between Library and Agent: A Requirement of Data Storage in Library and Agent Systems

by **Ed Riding** (Dynix)

Prepared for the SISAC/BISAC/X12 EDI ILS Workshop, New Orleans, American Library Association Conference, June 25, 1993

Introduction

For the past four years, the Serials Industry Systems Advisory Committee (SISAC) has aggressively pursued a path that will facilitate libraries, subscription agents and publishers using Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) in the transferal of business information. SISAC's goal is to create standards that will allow computer systems in the serials community to interface or talk to each other, and thus reduce repetitive and costly rekeying of information. ANSI X12 was chosen as the mode or protocol of communicating this information. Members of SISAC X12 mapping committees have met frequently to identify the serials data elements that are transferred between trading partners and to "map" or find a place for these elements in the well-established X12 transaction sets.

In discussing data elements, we make assumptions about the requirements of our systems vis-a-vis EDI. One assumption is that data being transferred from one machine to another must have a way of linking to the appropriate information in the destination system. These links or match points must exist in order for the machines to talk to each other and avoid human intervention. The challenge lies in entering the proper control numbers in both the agent and library systems that serve as match points for EDI between the two. The purpose of this article is to identify match points necessary for successful EDI. Early recognition of missing links in our own systems will allow us to make the appropriate changes to accommodate the machine-to-machine communication that the marketplace requires.

Definition Match Points

Match points for Serials EDI are few but crucial. They should be considered mandatory in the SISAC implementation of X12. In an effort to clarify and standardize the match points, we have assigned them acronyms and have attempted to fully define them.

ACAT is the agent's catalog identifier. It is title and subscription-type specific.

PCAT is the publisher's catalog identifier, also referred to as the priced subscription configuration. PCAT is important if the library does business directly with the publisher and NOT through an agent. In the case of direct library to publisher communication, please read PCAT into anything mentioned about ACAT.

LSID stands for Library Subscription ID. This is the ILS-generated unique purchase order (PO) line item number.

ASID is the Agent's Subscription ID. It is generated by the agent's system and is client/subscription-specific. If the agent's system does not create such a number, the system must provide one from a combination of its client and title numbers.

PSID is the Publisher Subscription ID. It is used only when the library does business directly with the publisher. The data flow description below only mentions ASID, so the reader must substitute PSID for ASID to describe the library-to-publisher scenario.

LCN is the ILS-generated unique claim number or identifier which is volume, issue, and copy-specific.

SICI The Serial Issue and Contribution Identifier (SICI) is a crucial, but not always mandatory, piece of information. It is mentioned here because its inclusion on the claim will speed up the claiming process considerably. However, we must also include the warning that unless the ILS user has verified the SICI by scanning the SISAC bar code symbol, by checking the SICI against issue enumeration and chronology from the actual piece, or by its receipt of publisher-supplied dispatch data, the information which looks like a SICI sent on a claim cannot be considered a true SICI. If the volume/issue information is predicted by the ILS system, the claim will include volume/issue information which follows the format of the SICI. This information and the true SICI have different qualifiers. The agent will be responsible to reconcile the real SICI from the publisher with the volume/issue information from the ILS.

Data Flow for New Orders

To illustrate the importance of match points, let's review the various transactions that can occur between library and

agent and highlight the match points necessary for successful EDI exchange.

1. The library requests a quote by sending the **title related number** (LCCN or the ISSN) to the agents and **LSID** with a quote flag. The **LSID** must be stored on the agent system so that it can be returned with a quote.

2. The agent system sends back the quote response or price sales catalog information with the **ACAT.** The **ACAT** must be stored on the library system for future ordering.

3. If the title is purchased, the **ILS** reuses this **ACAT** and sends it back with the **LSID.** The LSIDs must be saved in the agent's system to be used in the next two steps.

4. After the order data matches on the **ACAT** in the agent's system, the agent sends back an order acknowledgment with the **LSID**. This number matches the order information on the ILS system and facilitates updating the ILS with an indication of whether the order will be filled.

5. The agent then sends the invoice for the order. The most important pieces here are the **LSID** and the agent's **ASID**. The library system matches the incoming invoice line item against its own **LSID**, and uses this match to associate the **ASID** with the right subscription, copy or copies. Storage of the **ASID** on the ILS is required for future processing.

6. The **ASID** is the essential piece of information returned to the agent on a claim for an overdue or damaged item. The **ASID** is essential for the agent's machine to quickly process the claim and discover the reason for the issue's tardiness. In addition, the library may claim using an issue-specific **SICI**, or, as mentioned above, volume/issue information following the format of the SICI. In addition, the ILS provides an **LCN** to be stored on the agent system.

7. After the agent system has determined the cause of the problem, it sends back a claim response with the **LCN** which enables the ILS to match the claim response with the proper copy and issue. This match could be based solely on a combination of **SICI** (or volume/issue information) and **ASID**, but since the correct item information is not always available in a claim, **LCN** is safer. If the agent discovers the item information generated from the ILS is incorrect, a corrected real SICI could be sent back on the claim response to alert the ILS of the correct enumeration and chronology.

Data Flow for Renewals

Since most serial orders appear in the form of subscription renewals, let's look at the renewal process in terms of match point number exchange.

1. When the paper renewal list is sent from the agent to the library, the librarian reconciles the ILS-generated list against the agent-supplied list. For now, let's assume this is a manual process.

2. The ILS generates various X12 transaction sets to communicate the renewal verification with the agent. If the

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And We Weren't There

by **Nat Bodian**
(Publisher's Marketing Consultant)

A Dollar's Not What It Used to Be

(This entry excerpted from ***The Joy of Publishing,*** © 1993 by **Nat Bodian** from the chapter "Book Publishing Origins, Firsts, and Curiosities in the 20th Century." The book is not yet under publishing contract.)

The Trade Paperback Phenomenon

One of the more interesting publishing developments, in the second half of this century, has been the evolution and growth of the 'trade paperback' — a class of books identical to hardcover editions and published simultaneously with them, but issued in paper covers by the original publishers. They are usually sold through bookstores, rather than mass-market paperback outlets, and at greatly-reduced prices from their hardcover counterparts.

A development of the trade paperback phenomenon is that such books have vastly increased the affordability of books not normally within the range of classroom textbook use, both as texts and on recommended reading lists as supplementary texts, at colleges and universities.

Trade paperbacks useful for the college classroom are sometimes called 'egg head' paperbacks. They are likely to be general works on such subjects as business, history, and philosophy, or other subjects taught at colleges and universities, and stocked in depth at most college bookstores.

The advantage to the originating publisher is that the book is printed as part of the book's normal pressrun, thereby reducing unit costs for both editions.

The advantage to the bookstore is that the books can be obtained at normal trade discounts, which are much higher than textbook discounts.

The advantage to the book's author is that the author receives the full royalty, something that is not done when the book is issued as a mass market paperback where the publisher and author split reprint licensing fees.

The advantage of the trade paperback to the student is that the price is usually about half the cost of the hardcover edition.

The trade paperback originated in April 1953 with the introduction of Anchor Books by Doubleday. Unlike its smaller-sized paper-covered counterparts which were distributed through newspaper and magazine distributors, Doubleday's Anchor Books line could be sold through traditional book wholesalers and directly to bookstores.

Early Anchor trade paperbacks won quick acceptance, according to publishing historian John Tebbel. In his *Between Covers* (Oxford U. Press, 1987, he wrote "Anchor's first four books sold 10,000 copies each within two weeks, even at what was considered high prices for those days — eighty-five cents to $1.25."

Random House, 1983). What an incredibly moving story of a son's personal voyage to find his mother's murderers during the savage Greek Civil War in the late 1940s.

Tom Leonhardt emails his greetings from the **University of Oklahoma**. He has been reading publishers' catalogs and we hope to publish some of his meanderings in a future issue of *ATG*.

On July 8, 1993, representatives from **Chadwyck-Healey** and the **United Nations** announced the signing of an agreement creating a new UN database and authorizing Chadwyck-Healey to be the official publisher of the UN bibliographic databases on CD-ROM.

We are tired. And through for this issue. If you want to send information for inclusion in "rumors" we would love it. Send contributions, press releases, etc., to your editor or one of your Associate Editors Thanks!

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trading agreement is to "renew till forbid," the only transactions sent from library to publisher are "non-renewals" or order changes. Most order changes can be handled as orders by simply increasing or decreasing the number ordered. If the renewal agreement requires verification of each line item, or if the library changes the **LSID** from year to year or subscription to subscription, a new order transaction will need to be created for each line item. In either case, the ILS sends the order with the new or old **LSID** along with the **ASID** received in previous invoices.

3. The agent system matches each incoming renewal (order) **LSID** against its existing subscriptions based on the **ASID**. If the ILS is sending a new **LSID**, this process should replace old **LSIDs** with the new for any future processing. The invoice is sent back with both **LSID** and **ASID** and matches the subscription information in the ILS based on the **LSID**. Here again, the agent may change the **ASID** from year-to-year as long as it sends **LSIDs** to match up in the ILS. The ILS would then be responsible to replace old **ASIDs** with new.

4. The claiming and claim response cycle works as described under New Orders.

Although the SISAC X12 implementation provides a place for these match points, trading partners must obviously provide the data in order to make the match. If the ILS provides an order or renewal list with a many-subscription PO number instead of the LSID, or if the agent is unable to store an LSID, the agent can easily fill the order. When it sends back invoice information, however, the library system requires manual intervention to match up newly received invoice information with its order or renewal line items. A similar problem occurs if the agent is unable to provide a subscription-specific ASID or if the library system is incapable of storing the ASID. When the electronic claim is generated and sent to the agent, it must either carry much more information than necessary in order to make the match (library number, title information, etc.), or the agent must match up the claim manually. Either way, cost is increased and EDI advantages reduced.

Conclusion

The acceptance of the full EDI model dictates the storage of match points in both the agent and library systems. Specifically, the ILS needs to store the ACAT (PCAT) and LSID (PSID). The agent or publisher system needs to store LSIDs and LCNs. We recognize that for many library and agent systems, this necessitates changes to the specifications for their internal data management. Some have already seen the train coming down the tracks and have changed their systems to accommodate EDI. Others will need to modify their systems to play the EDI game. Both libraries and agents cannot expect EDI to change the way we do business unless we first change our business procedures to do EDI.

Additional information about BISAC and SISAC is available from the Book Industry Study Group, 160 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10010, 212-929-1393, fax 212-989-7542.

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